

REMARKS

Claims 1-42 are pending herein.

Applicants respectfully note that form PTOL-326 mailed with the present Office Action indicates that only claims 1-15 are pending. However, Applicants respectfully assert that claims 1-42 are pending, with claims 16-42 being withdrawn. Additionally, if claims 1-15 are found to be allowable, Applicants respectfully request that the USPTO consider rejoining withdrawn claims 16-42 as a sub-combination as discussed on page 3 of the Restriction Requirement issued November 27, 2007.

I. The obviousness rejections of claims 1-15 based on Okimoto (US 6,268,926) in view of Tamai (US 2002/0061204), as noted on page 4 of the Office Action.

The USPTO respectfully rejects claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okimoto in view of Tamai. Claim 1 is an independent claim.

A. The cited references do not teach or suggest a receiving section to receive electronic mail including image data and post processing data representing a post processing to be applied to the print product created on the basis of the image data, as claimed in independent claim 1.

Claim 1 claims in relevant part:

“a receiving section to receive said electronic mail including said image data and finishing information ~~post processing data~~ representing a post processing to be applied to said print product created on the basis of said image data, wherein said print product includes a single paper sheet or a plurality of paper sheets, on each of which an image is already formed through a whole image forming process based on said image data, and said post processing is defined as such a physical treatment that is to be applied to said print product after said whole image forming process is completed, so as to physically change an appearance and/or a binding mode of said print product;”
(emphasis added herein)

No new matter is added by the amendments. Support for the amendments is found on page 26, lines 1-20 and page 32, line 18 through page 33, line 13 of the present specification. Regarding these limitations, it is respectfully not seen where the cited references teach or suggest the claimed structure quoted above.

For example, the USPTO respectfully argues on page 4 of the Office Action that Okimoto teaches or suggests a receiving section (i.e., a mail reception system) to receive an electronic mail including image data (i.e., print data) and finishing information (i.e., a print pattern) representing a post processing to be applied to the print product created on the basis of the image data indicative of how the print data included in the attached file is desired to be printed at the transfer destination.

However, it is respectfully important to note that **the receiving section of Okimoto is not structured to receive electronic mail including both image data and post processing data** representing a post processing to be applied to the print product created on the basis of the image data. Instead, column 5, line 25-35 of Okimoto discloses a computer system which is capable of receiving mail from another computer system via a communication line (See column 5, lines 25-35). The received mail of Okimoto includes ordinary mail, print mail, and cancel mail (See column 7, lines 25-29 of Okimoto). Each mail data set of Okimoto includes data of an envelope 50a, data of a header 50b, and data of a body section 50c. The body section 50c **is merely attached with a print data file including print data desired to be printed at the transfer destination.** Additionally, the print information of header 50b includes only the date and time to print data in an attached file and file attributes such as a page description language and the number of sheets onto which to print the print data.

It is respectfully important to note that **none of this print information disclosed by Okimoto includes post processing data representing a post processing to be applied to said print product created on the basis of image data,** as claimed in claim 1. For example, it is respectfully asserted that **the cited finishing information of Okimoto is not a physical treatment that physically changes an appearance and/or a binding mode of said print product,** as claimed in claim 1. Instead, it is respectfully asserted that the cited finishing information of Okimoto (i.e., reducing the size of a print pattern defined by one page's worth of print data so that reduced print patterns defined by more than one page's worth of print data can be printed onto one sheet of paper) is a type of image processing that is applied to image data, and is respectfully not an example of physically changing an appearance and/or a binding mode of the paper sheets included in the print product. Thus, it is further respectfully asserted

that the remaining portions of **Okimoto also do not teach or suggest any type of post processing that physically changes the print product**, as claimed in claim 1.

It is also respectfully important to note that the page description language of Okimoto is not post processing data representing a post processing. Instead, as noted at column 21, lines 47-57 of Okimoto, **the page description language only refers to the specific format of the print data, such as PCL, PostScript, or GDI, and thus is not information related to post processing**, as claimed in claim 1.

Thus, overall, it is respectfully asserted that Okimoto does not teach or suggest the receiving section of claim 1 that is structured to receive both image data and post processing data.

It is also respectfully asserted that Tamai does not overcome these deficiencies in the primary reference Okimoto. Specifically, the USPTO respectfully argues on page 7 of the Office Action that the post processing apparatus 36 of Tamai performs a stapling process, a punching process, or the like onto the printed sheets at paragraph [0059], page 3.

However, it is respectfully asserted that Tamai does not teach or suggest receiving information regarding the stapling process or punching process by electronic mail. Figure 2 of Tamai shows the data receiving section 21 which receives image data and signals from PC's (See column 3, paragraphs [0051] and [0052] of Tamai), but it is respectfully important to note that data receiving section 21 does not receive data by electronic mail relating to the stapling and punching, as claimed in claim 1.

In contrast, present Figure 1 illustrates one possible example of the claimed structure quoted above. For example, as described on pages 39-40 of the present specification, **email receiving apparatus 20 receives finishing information (i.e., post processing data) in the form of a tag that indicates post-processing such as double-sided printing or punching**. Additionally, page 26 of the present specification describes how the post processing can be "stapled output," "output in booklet," "punching," or "stamping." It is respectfully important to note that **these post processing steps are physical treatments performed on the print product**, such as stapling the pages, arranging the pages in a booklet, punching holes in the

paper, or stamping the paper which **physically change an appearance and/or binding mode of the print product**, as claimed in claim 1.

Thus, email receiving apparatus 20 is one possible embodiment of a receiving section to receive electronic mail including image data and post processing data representing a post processing to be applied to the print product created on the basis of the image data, as claimed in claim 1.

The distinction is important and non-trivial because it presents significant advantages over conventional structures. For example, as discussed on pages 3-4 of the present specification, the specifically claimed structure of claim 1 makes it possible to change the post processing data acquired from the electronic mail to changed information suitable for the image forming apparatus itself, based on the result of comparison made by the post processing data judging section. Thus, it becomes possible to implement the image forming operation and the post processing, even if the post processing established on the electronic mail sender side does not match the post processing ability of the image forming apparatus on the receiver side.

Thus, it is respectfully asserted that the cited references, taken either alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest all of the limitations of independent claim 1. Therefore, it is respectfully asserted that independent claim 1 is allowable over the cited references.

B. Further explanation.

As noted above in section I, the cited references taken alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest a receiving section to receive electronic mail including image data and post processing data representing a post processing to be applied to the print product created on the basis of the image data, as claimed in independent claim 1.

Thus, it respectfully follows that the cited references taken alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest an acquiring section to acquire both image data and post processing data, a post processing data judging section to determine whether or not the post processing is provided in the mage forming apparatus itself as an applicable post processing, a determining section to determine whether or not said post processing data should be changed, and an establishing section to establish a set of setting items representing post processing.

In other words, Applicants respectfully assert that the cited references taken alone or in combination do not control post processing according to the post processing data included in the electronic mail.

C. The dependent claims.

As noted above, it is respectfully asserted that independent claim 1 is allowable, and therefore it is further respectfully asserted that dependent claims 2-15 are also allowable.

II. Conclusion.

Reconsideration and allowance of all of the claims is respectfully requested.

If there are any additional charges with respect to this Amendment or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130.

Please contact the undersigned for any reason. Applicants seek to cooperate with the Examiner including via telephone if convenient for the Examiner.

Respectfully submitted,

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